

As the 2004 presidential elections approach the citizens of the United States, America is plagued with a crisis that has catastrophic repercussions— its youth are not voting. One in five 18–24 year-olds voted in the 1998 elections and estimates show that 28% voted in the 2000 elections. The founding fathers of this great nation bestowed upon us the power to run our own government through our fundamental right to vote. With the Democratic and Republican primaries around the corner and the presidential election drawing near, The Art of Democracy calls on Americans to exercise their crucial right to vote.

The Art of Democracy is a non-profit, non-partisan organization based out of Santa Fe, NM dedicated to inspiring at least 1 million progressive Americans to become voters, to be active participants in the political process, and to help spread the understanding that these actions are only the beginning. Over the last forty years, many elections have been decided by a handful of votes. This can be seen with the elections of Presidents Kennedy and Bush, as well as in the elections of many members of the U.S. House and Senate. The Art of Democracy believes that dramatically-increased engagement in our political process will lead to much better outcomes in the issues facing our country today, including education, health and health care, environment, security, transportation—all of which have a direct impact on the future of the Los Alamos National Labs.

The Art of Democracy is using several strategies, including major stage events and community art projects, to dramatically increase public participation in our democratic institutions. What makes America so great is Americans. In these momentous times we call on each other to rise up and help shape our shared future.

At the core of The Art of Democracy is the Promise Form, which can be found on-line at artofdemocracy.org or in paper form in the LANL Student-Mentor office. This pledge calls on Americans to promise participation in the political arena by agreeing to vote in all national and statewide elections and to convince at least two non-voting friends to do the same. Please join us in this historic enterprise and fill out a promise form.

For more information on The Art of Democracy's projects, art exhibits, partners and volunteering please visit artofdemocracy.org and take back citizen control of the government.

“The punishment suffered by the wise who refuse to take part in the government, is to live under the government of bad men.” – Plato